

EGREMONT GREEN COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday September 8, 2021, 4:00 p.m. at French Park Pavilion

The meeting opened at 4:11 p.m.

Members present: Emily Eyre (co-chair), Pat Konecky (co-chair), Marj Wexler, Juliette Haas, Sharon Waskow. Also present: Bonnie Greenwood.

Minutes of the August 4, 2021, meeting were accepted unanimously after Marj added one point of clarification.

Old Business

Sustainability Coordinator Report

The town was awarded \$1,200 grant from the MRF Advisory Board, with which the town chose to purchase 130 blue recycle bins to distribute to residents at the transfer station. Juliette proposed that the Green Committee host a day on a weekend during which committee members offer recycling education and give blue bins to residents who do not yet have one. Promotion for the event could be something such as “Come pick up a blue bin if you don’t have one!”

Recycling Postcard mailing: Juliette is working on the postcard; she sent the draft to the committee, and will send a final copy to the committee before mailing to residents.

Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness: the town received a \$40,000 grant to plan for climate change. The MVP committee is now focusing on how best to deliver the goals mentioned in the grant application.

EGC meeting with Board of Selectmen regarding agreements related to public

communications: Pat attended the August 17, 2021 select board meeting during which the BoS affirmed, because advocacy is included in the Green Committee’s mission statement posted on the Town website, it is appropriate for the Green Committee to participate in advocacy initiatives. The Board of Selectmen expressed a strong statement of confidence in the Green Committee and did not feel the need to micromanage the committee.

It was reported by Select Board member Mary Brazie, that if a member of the Green Committee plans to sign a petition or post an article on behalf of the Green Committee, the Committee should take a vote during a preceding meeting indicating the committee agrees to the posting. If a committee member expects to repeatedly communicate with the public about a specific issue, a single committee vote of approval is sufficient.

When there needs to be a quick turn-around, such as a petition, the Green Committee member should sign as an individual. However, a member can sign as “NAME, member of the Egremont Green Committee” rather than “on behalf” of the Egremont Green Committee.

If there is a petition to sign that the Committee would like to sign but is pressed for time, the Committee can call a meeting specifically to vote on the issue, as long as it is posted on the town website 48 business hours before the meeting.

Apparel Impact Bin set up update:

Marj Wexler reported that two bins have been installed at the transfer station and are ready to use. Unfortunately, the Committee learned that bedding of any kind is not permitted in the bins. Marj will ask Will Brinker if a sandwich board is available to be used indicating “No Bedding” and be placed by the bins. Goodwill is reluctant to accept bedding. Hartsprings is an organization that may accept bedding.

Restaurant packaging reduction efforts:

Sharon and Emily (subcommittee) have created two documents, one for residents and one for food establishments, to encourage reduction of single-use plastic.

The food establishment document will be given to owners/manager in order to encourage them to reduce single-use plastic in their business. Various suggestions were made for clarification.

Bonnie provided information for a website called PacePartners.com. The site has a green restaurant program recommendation that may be able to assist to the subcommittee.

Juliette said once the piece is complete, it will be given with every permit issued to food establishments annually.

Resident Tip-Guide includes ways to encourage restaurants to reduce their use of single use plastic and support restaurants, which are adopting sustainability practices.

The Committee was highly supportive of these efforts.

To be discussed next meeting: how to create an attestation form / pledge that they will do their best to promote sustainable practices.

Berkshire Edge: Pat suggested writing about the new Western Mass DEP coordinator Susan Waite. The committee could create a series of questions we can email to her and extrapolate and article. Sharon and Pat will create 4 questions.

Other Edge topic: Sharon suggested the NY Times article about Big Oil Wants You to Blame Yourself and she has some ideas on how to create an Edge article from it.

Edge articles will be discussed further at the next meeting.

New Business:

Repair workshop: Pat updated the committee that Jenny Russell of Sheffield would like to create a repair workshop to take place in Sheffield. They are looking for people to help others fix things so the items don't need to be thrown out. Pat was pleased to report that so far a few Egremonters have volunteered. Tentatively set for early November at the Sheffield Library or Sheffield community park, providing it's before the electricity in park will be turned off for the winter.

Pat updated the committee about the upcoming tri-town Green Committee meeting to share ideas and support efforts. September 30, 2021 5:00 p.m. via Zoom. Our committee has been asked to create past, present, and future efforts in Egremont.

The question was raised if the Committee has ever created a list of efforts, which describes what the Committee has accomplished. It was agreed that it could be a very useful document to have. The committee created a partial list during the meeting and agreed that further work on the list was needed.

Other Business:

Emily provided an update regarding Heidi Zorn's new cannabis store Devine's sustainability efforts. She continues to look for sustainable packaging and looks forward to being interviewed for a Berkshire Edge article once her store opens.

Emily reported an additional "No Idling" sign has been installed in a highly visible location at the Egremont Free Library. Bonnie says she has noticed decline in idling. Emily has not yet

approached the S. Egremont Post Office or North Egremont General Store to ask if they would consider posting a Town supplied sign.

Bonnie addressed the movement Extended Producer Responsibility.

Pat discussed educating the public on bills in our legislature. The Committee was supportive of this idea.

The next meeting will be held on October 12, 2021 at 4:00 p.m.

The meeting adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Emily Eyre